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A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE RISE
AND PROGRESS OF

PHOTOGRAPHY,

WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO
THE PRACTICE OF THE

DAGUERREOTYPE.

BY

HENRY VINES,

Photographic Artist.

BRISTOL:

J. M. JONES, CLARE STREET.

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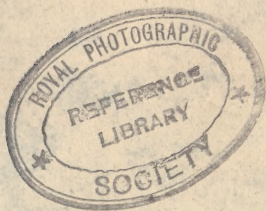
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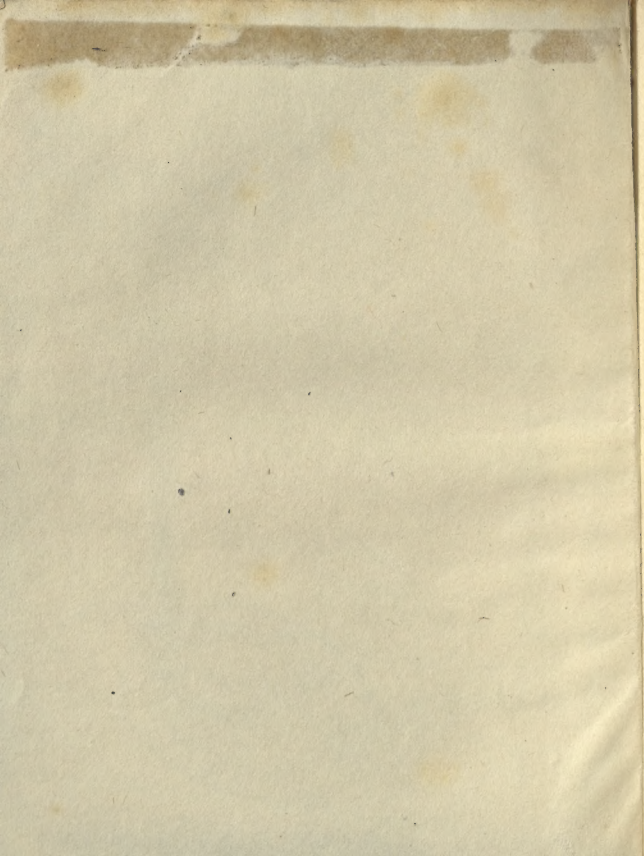
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A BRIEF SKETCH
OF THE
RISE AND PROGRESS
OF
Photography,

WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE
PRACTICE OF THE

DAGUERREOTYPE;

ALSO,
A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS,
AND SUGGESTIONS TO THOSE WHO MAY BE
DESIROUS OF PROCURING GOOD

Photographic Portraits.

BY
H E N R Y V I N E S,
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DAQUERTYPE

A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS
AND INSTRUCTIONS TO PHOTOGRAPHERS
AND AMATEURS OF THE PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

BY J. M. DAQUER

NEW YORK: J. M. DAQUER, 1840.

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THE following sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Daguerrian Art is submitted to the Public with a view to remove certain erroneous impressions which extensively prevail. The writer has endeavoured to describe the process by which Daguerreotypes are produced, and to reply to the question, so frequently asked,—“How is it that all Photographs are not equally good?” He has shown that prejudices against Photographic Portraits are nearly extinct, and, where they exist, are confined to those inferior productions which have justly been represented as “grim anamorphoses of humanity, and a terror to the domestic circle.” This treatise contains

an exposition of that new department of the Photographic Art which consists in taking binocular portraits. An account of the origin, construction, and application of the Stereoscope, with a diagram, is also given. As the work is intended for popular use, technical terms have been studiously avoided; and some general suggestions, the result of many years practical experience, are appended, which may prove of real utility to those who may be desirous of obtaining good Photographic Portraits.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INSTITUTION,

32, *Park Street*, June, 1852.

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PHOTOGRAPHY.

HISTORICAL SKETCH—DAGUERRE'S DISCOVERY—IMPROVEMENTS BY VARIOUS HANDS.

THE term Photography is derived from two Greek words, *phos*, light, and *grapho*, I delineate. It means literally, drawing by Light, and is applied to the art of making pictures, or impressions, by the agency of Light. It is divided, according to the methods adopted for producing the pictures, into DAGUERREOTYPE, CALOTYPE, CHRYSOTYPE, CYANOTYPE, and a great variety of other *Types*, which it is not necessary here to describe.

For many centuries Light has been

known to produce other effects than that of merely illuminating objects. Through all time, the most casual observer must have remarked that the Sun's rays possessed the power of destroying the color in some bodies, and of increasing it in others; yet, for ages, this fact, which modern science has rendered available for "limning the fleeting shade of expression in the human face," excited but little interest or attention. These phenomena are produced by the *chemical action* of Light, which has the power of either decomposing bodies, or of causing them to combine more readily. The chief endeavour of the Photographer is to employ such compounds as are held together by the least possible degree of affinity; and so far as our present knowledge extends, experiment has proved that the compounds of silver are most readily acted upon.

It is now nearly forty years ago that a

French gentleman, M. NIEPCE, occupied himself in his retirement at Chalons with a series of experiments which he had instituted for the purpose of discovering whether the pictures produced by the Camera obscura could be rendered fixed and permanent. At the same time, but unknown to M. Niepcé, the celebrated French artist, DAGUERRE,* was also engaged in a similar pursuit. Prior to these investigations, Sir HUMPHREY DAVY and Mr. WEDGEWOOD had endeavoured to produce impressions of external objects on paper, by the agency of Light. At a later period, and whilst DAGUERRE was employed in perfecting the process which

* This distinguished experimentalist and philosopher died in Paris on the 10th of July, 1851, in the 62nd year of his age. By this event the scientific world has sustained an irreparable loss. To him an everlasting debt of gratitude is due. He was a man of extreme modesty and great personal worth.

bears his name, Mr. FOX TALBOT, an English savant, and a fellow of the Royal Society, succeeded in producing impressions of objects delineated by the Camera, by means of sensitive paper. Subsequently the French Government purchased and published Daguerre's secret, and the scientific world was enriched by one of the most singular and startling discoveries of modern times.

At first the numerous tribes of operators attempted merely to transfer to their plates copies of still life, such as buildings, landscapes, statues, &c., and even these were imperfect. Experience, however, soon suggested a thousand modifications of the original process, and the transition from faint and imperfect traces on the metallic plate to sharp and well-defined outlines was rapidly effected. The first specimens of Photographic Portraits were, as may be supposed, very imperfect representa-

tions of the "human face divine;" but what cannot science and energy accomplish? Instead of producing grim cadaverous representations of our friends, a skilful Daguerreotypist of the present day is able to excel the painter, and, without poetic fiction, to "snatch a grace beyond the reach of art."

It would be impossible to describe, in so brief a notice, the various improvements which have been made in Photography. Suffice it to say that such men as HERSCHELL, MOSER, MELLONI, ARAGO, CHEVALIER, FIZEAU, FYFE, BECQUERIL, DRAPER, TALBOT, and HUNT, have by their researches contributed invaluable aids to this department of science. Without arrogating to himself the merits of these distinguished savans, the writer of this brief sketch may also claim to have effected some improvements in three important branches of the art, viz. :—pro-

ducing, by a new process, a more exquisite polish on the silver tablets destined to receive the photographic image; a novel method of submitting those tablets to chemical action; and a more suitable combination of chemical agents than that in general use. Whether or not he has succeeded in producing superior Photographic portraits, he confidently leaves the public to decide.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS.

DAGUERREOTYPES are taken on plates of copper, coated with pure silver. In this respect the process differs from every other branch of the Photographic art. It derives its appellation from its immortal inventor, DAGUERRE, who published his discovery in August, 1839. The process now in general use comprises six distinct operations, each of which requires extreme care and attention on the part of the manipulator :—

1. Cleaning and polishing the plate.
2. Rendering it sensitive to the action of light.
3. Submitting it to the focus of either a refracting or reflecting Camera.
4. Developing the Photographic image

by exposing it to the vapour of Mercury, or some other volatile metal.

5. Removing the sensitive surface from the plate.

6. Gilding, or fixing the portrait, by which it is rendered permanent, and its tone considerably improved.

It would be uninteresting to the general reader, and incompatible with the design of this brief sketch, to detail the various methods adopted by different manipulators to accomplish these results. No two Photographers work exactly alike. Tastes also differ. One artist will strive to produce a tone of picture which another will as studiously endeavour to avoid; yet each style of portrait has its admirers, and is, in this respect, analagous to the varied style of miniature painters. We are now speaking of those Photographers who are thoroughly masters of their profession, and do not include that numerous class of

dabblers in Photography, whose flat, toneless productions on the one hand, or spurious chiaroscuros on the other, will be hereafter referred to. Any individual on visiting the establishments of Messrs. Kilburn, Claudet, or Beard, in London, will be convinced of the truth of these remarks. All produce good portraits, but their specimens exhibit a striking difference in style and tone. This arises from their different methods of conducting some of the above operations. As in the succeeding part of this treatise, reference will again be made to this subject, it is necessary here only to describe, in general terms, how a Daguerreotype portrait is produced.

A plate of copper with a layer of silver on its surface being selected, is wrought up to a brilliant black polish, varying in intensity according to the method adopted. A chemical action is established by expos-

ing it for a definite period to the vapour of Iodine, Bromine, or their combinations, —thus forming a Bromo-iodide of silver, which experiment has proved to be readily decomposed by light. The plate is now ready to receive the lenticular image formed in the Camera Obscura. Any image, which, being produced by the lens of this instrument, falls upon the ground glass in its dark chamber, may be secured with all the beautiful gradations of light and shade, either on a metallic or paper tablet. If the plate be “allowed to remain under the influence of the radiations for a sufficient length of time, a faithful picture of the illuminated objects is delineated on the plate by the visible decomposition and darkening of the iodized surface. The plate is not, however, in practice, allowed to assume this condition; after an exposure of a few seconds the radiant influence is cut off, and the eye cannot detect any evidence

of change on the yellow plate. It is now exposed to the vapour of Mercury, and that metal, in a state of exceedingly fine division, is condensed upon the plate ; but that condensation is not uniformly spread upon its face. In exact proportion to the amount of chemical action produced, is the deposit of mercurial vapour. Is the change by which this peculiar power of condensation is effected, a chemical, calorific, electrical, or merely a molecular one? The evidences at present are not sufficient to determine the question. In all probability we have the involved action of several forces.*"

The picture being developed by the mercurial vapour, the plate is next freed from its sensitive coating by washing it in a strong solution of hyposulphite of soda. When dried, the portrait is more distinctly seen ; but in this state it is ex-

* Hunt's Poetry of Science.

tremely delicate, resembling the bloom on a ripe plum. The slightest touch of the finger would destroy that portion of the image to which it was applied. This fragile surface, also, on exposure to the air, soon becomes oxidized, which accounts for the idea extensively prevailing that Daguerreotypes are liable to fade, and in course of years entirely to disappear from the tablet. Many persons who had portraits taken in the early stages of the art—*before the discovery of the after process of fixing or gilding*, now about to be described—have been much annoyed by the gradual disappearance of the portrait of a valued friend or relative.

The difference of light and shade in the impression is entirely dependent on the adhesion of minute globules of metallic mercury. These attach themselves in a greater or less quantity, according to the varied intensity of the light which has been admitted into the Camera. In order

to give greater adhesion to the mercurial deposit, and thus fix and render permanent the impression on the plate, various methods have been suggested by Berard, Dr. Berres, of Vienna, and other scientific individuals ; but the discovery of the excellent process now in general use, is unquestionably due to Mr. Fizeau. By means of heat, a thin film of pure gold is precipitated upon the silver, and also upon the mercury, but with very different results. The silver, which by its reflection forms the shadows of the picture, is darkened and rendered more brilliant. The mercury, on the contrary, which forms the lights, becomes amalgamated with the gold, which not only increases the strength and transparency of the proof, but *perfectly fixes the picture* ; and the unpleasant metallic reflection, which compels the observer to view it in a particular light, is in a great measure obviated.

ON THE COLORING OF THE PORTRAIT.

As the portraits taken by the Daguerreotype process are only represented in light and shade, and not in the colors as they appear in nature, the interesting problem yet remains to be solved—whether it ever will be possible to retain the colors on the plate as they appear in the Camera. We have frequently seen it announced in the public prints that some clever experimentalists had discovered a method of reproducing colors by the Daguerreotype ; but from communications which we have had with Professors of Photography in France, Germany, and America, we are assured, on the best authority, that no such dis-

covery has yet been made*. On this subject the celebrated French philosopher, M. Arago, observes :—

“It has been a subject of anxious inquiry whether, after having obtained by the Daguerreotype the most admirable gradations of light and shade, it will not be possible to obtain by it the reproduction of colors : to substitute, in a word,

* In America the controversy is still going on respecting the discoveries said to have been made by the Rev. Mr. HILL, which are called Hillotype. One writer persists that Mr. HILL has really invented a method of retaining the colors on the Daguerrian plate—that he has seen the specimens, the colors of which exceed in brilliancy, delicacy, and beauty, anything which the hand of an artist has ever produced. Other writers strenuously affirm that if Mr. HILL had made the discovery, he would, long ere this, have made it known to the world.

In France, M. NIEPCE is said to have discovered a method of retaining the colors on the plate. Such knowledge, however, has not been rendered available by any of the French operators.

paintings in lieu of the sort of *aqua tinta* engravings which are now produced. This problem will be solved only when an elementary substance shall be discovered, which the red rays will color red, the yellow rays yellow, the blue rays blue, &c."

After alluding to some experiments of M. Niepcé, and Sir John Herschell, bearing on this question, he adds:—"In presence of these facts, it would certainly be rash to affirm that the natural colors of objects will not one day be produced in Photographic images."—Mr. Hunt, also, in his "Researches on Light," in the chapter "On the probability of producing colored pictures by the solar radiations," details a variety of ingenious experiments, from which he arrives at the same conclusion as M. Arago. "Surely," says he, "these results appear to encourage the hope that we may eventually

arrive at a process, by which external nature may be made to impress its images on prepared surfaces, in all the beauty of their native coloration."

But in the absence of this grand discovery, the Photographer is obliged to resort to art to color his portrait. It must be obvious, therefore, that in proportion to his artistic skill and taste, will be the measure of his success in this delicate operation. A difference of opinion prevails in the public mind as to whether a really good Daguerreotype can be improved by coloring. We will not here discuss the question, but merely remark, that we have been frequently disgusted on inspecting Photographs, *said to be colored*, on which a little red powder only has been rubbed on the cheeks and lips. Of such coloring there can be but one opinion. To color a portrait effectively, several things are requisite in an artist.

He must possess “a talent for drawing—taste—due discrimination of effect—strict observance of the characteristic points in the features of the subject—quick perception of the beautiful, and a knowledge of the art of mixing colors, and blending tints.”

REASONS ASSIGNED WHY ALL PHOTOGRAPHS ARE NOT EQUALLY GOOD ; AND THE QUESTION ANSWERED—"WHY ARE SOME OPERATORS MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN OTHERS ?"

FROM a hasty and superficial glance at the Science of Photography, it might be supposed that as landscapes and portraits are produced by the direct agency of the solar rays, the operator, whoever he may be, cannot fail to produce a successful picture. This opinion is strengthened by the fact that to a certain extent mechanical means are employed in the process. Than this, however, there cannot be a greater mistake. It is as absolutely necessary that the Daguerreotypist should possess

correct taste, and an eye for pictorial effect, as that a painter should assiduously study composition. The manner in which the light falls on the sitter, at the moment of operating is of the utmost importance. Some glass Cameras are so constructed that no skill or experience could produce, under such a canopy, a first-class Photograph. How often do we observe, in specimens of the Photographic Art, an utter absence of grace, effect, and harmony? Flat, toneless faces, ill-arranged draperies, and distorted attitudes annoy us by their positive ugliness; but when taste has directed the operations of the manipulator, nothing can be more charming than the effects produced. Again, the Daguerreotypist, to succeed, must be a chemist also. It was only after years of painful and laborious research in the laboratory that Daguerre so far perfected his process as by its results to astonish the

scientific world ; and it is only by the most patient investigation that really good effects can now be obtained. There are so many subtle influences to be dealt with in Daguerreotyping, that too much caution cannot be exercised. The operator must know intimately the nature and properties of Light ; he must be able, by analysis and by synthesis, either to dissect and divide, or to blend the prismatic tints ; to distinguish between those rays which convey heat, and those which are vehicles of chemical action : in short, if he would succeed in his profession, he must be a votary of science as well as of art. Unless he be so, his sitters will assuredly be caricatured, and instead of producing transcripts of nature with unerring fidelity, he will only succeed in transferring to his plate unsatisfactory, and, indeed, unpleasing impressions. The absence, therefore, of artistic taste, and of scientific knowledge will in

many instances explain why all photographic portraits are not equally good.

The mechanical and chemical parts of the process, also, in order to be successful, require immense practice. A few seconds exposure too long, or too short, to the Iodine and Bromine, will destroy that richness and brilliancy of tone so much admired and so difficult to produce. The action of these subtle elements on the silver plate produces changes in its color; these changes are so extremely delicate that none but a practised eye can correctly appreciate them;—the most experienced manipulator, under certain states of the atmosphere, is himself deceived; and it is only after the proof is developed by the metallic vapour, that he discovers the cause of his error.

Extreme care and mature judgment are indispensable in timing the next operation—that of submitting the plate to the action

of light in the Camera. The difficulty of estimating the exact amount of time which is required, is considerably increased by the frequent variation of the chemical action of the light on different days, and often on different hours of the same day. A fog, or slight haziness of the atmosphere, will also intercept the rays which produce chemical change, and thus annoy the operator and disappoint the sitter. Again, supposing the plate to have been properly prepared, and the exact amount of light admitted into the Camera, the next operation is equally delicate,—that of rendering the portrait visible by the vapour of mercury. A few seconds more or less prolonged (the exact time depending partly on the temperature of the metal, and partly on the amount of light which has fallen on the plate in the Camera), will materially injure the portrait, and mar that depth and transparency of tone which

so strikingly mark the superiority of some impressions over others.

The portrait being finished, if it presents a poor, flat, cold, grey tone, with a glazed eye, and such an absence of life, that one might almost imagine the sitter had started from his coffin to be Daguerreotyped; or, if the light parts of the picture are of a chalky white—the middle tint entirely destroyed—the dark shadows of a dead black wanting unity, truth, transparency, softness, harmony, and all that constitutes a legitimate chiaroscuro—an experienced manipulator sees at a glance the cause of the error, in the preparation of his plate, and knowing the cause will be able to remedy the evil in the next sitting; while a mere dabbler in Photography may toil for hours—varying this part of the process, and varying that—exhausting the patience of the sitter without producing any good result.

From the preceding statements it will be evident that a first-class photograph does not depend on the perfection of any one operation, but on a series of operations, each of which must be conducted with the utmost care. When the above contingencies are maturely considered, (and they are only a few—it would be tedious to enumerate all), will it be a matter of surprise that all Photographs are not equally good? or that the effects produced by different hands present as great a dissimilarity as those masterpieces of genius by RUBENS or RAPHAEL present, when contrasted with some of the trashy productions of later times?

PREJUDICES AGAINST DAGUERREO-
TYPE PORTRAITS FAST DISAP-
PEARING ; REASONS WHY ; AND
PROOF THAT SUCH PREJUDICES
HAVE NOT BEEN GROUNDLESS.

PERHAPS no science or art that has ever been revealed to mankind, has had to encounter a greater amount of opposition and prejudice than the Science of Photography ; but notwithstanding this, like all other truths, it has gradually made its way ; and the increasing demand for *good* DAGUERREOTYPES, not in one establishment only, but throughout the world, is a satisfactory proof that prejudice is gradually loosening its hold upon the public mind.

It cannot be denied that the grim, cada-

verous specimens which were produced in the infancy of this beautiful science were calculated to give a very unfavorable impression. Some of the portraits brought to my Institution to be exchanged, would almost make one despair of the art. Portions of the features have been entirely destroyed, and though, through the mist, such distorted specimens may present some likeness of the sitter, still, as a whole, they are only the exhibition of ridiculous caricatures. As many thousands of such portraits have been scattered over the country, it is not surprising that many persons of taste should have entertained a strong aversion to Daguerreotypes generally ; bnt this feeling of dislike has now almost disappeared. The rapid improvements which have been effected in every branch of Photography—the hundreds of portraits which are taken daily, in which the harmony of the attitude unites with

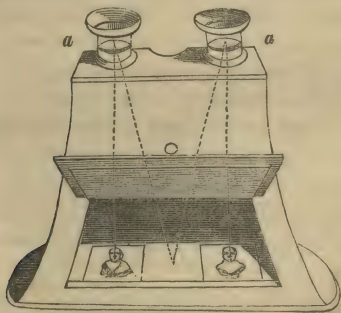
the expression of the face—the truthfulness of the likeness, and the brilliancy of the tone, have all combined to win the admiration of the most fastidious critic. Daguerreotypes have been extensively patronized in this country by her Majesty the Queen and her household, and by multitudes of noble and genteel families throughout the world.

THE STEREOSCOPE AND SOLID DAGUERREOTYPES.

ONE of the latest applications of science to Photography is the Stereoscope. The term is a compound one, signifying "solids I see," from its peculiar property of representing two portraits taken at different angles as a solid body. For the invention of the instrument we are indebted to Professor Wheatstone. On the 21st of June, 1838, he read a paper at the Royal Society "on some previously unobserved phenomena of binocular vision" (sight with two eyes), in which he described the Stereoscope. In 1839 Mr. Wheatstone brought his discovery before the British Association, when it gave rise to a discussion of great interest, in which Sir David Brewster and Professor Whewell took part.

Sir John Herschell characterized the discovery "as one of the most curious and beautiful, for its simplicity, in the entire range of experimental optics."

The following engraving represents the Lenticular Stereoscope as used for viewing Daguerreotypes;—the merit of the discovery of this particular form of the instrument, is unquestionably due to Sir David Brewster. *



* It was in the spring of 1850 that Sir David

The eye glasses *a a* throw the images out of the direct line to the centre between the eyes ; and both images being in this way removed in a direction towards each other, combine, and thus produce the effect of solidity. This ingenious instrument has also solved, not merely to the understanding, but to the actual sight of every one, the problem, so long the puzzle of philosophers, how it is that having two eyes we still see but one of each object ; or, in other words, how it is that we see a single object in its length, breadth, and thickness ; though the image of it formed on either retina cannot be precisely the

Brewster showed this instrument, in Paris, to M. l'Abbe Moigno, the distinguished author of *L'Optique Moderne*, and to M. Soleil. The Stereoscope attracted the particular notice of the Queen, in the Great Exhibition of 1851, and M. Soleil executed a beautiful instrument, which was presented to Her Majesty, since which many thousands have been sold.

same, as it is viewed by each eye at different angles.

“Were a painter (says Sir David Brewster,) called upon to take drawings of a statue as seen by each eye, he would fix, at the height of his eyes, a metallic plate, with two small holes in it, and he would then draw the statue as seen through the holes by each eye. These pictures, however, whatever be his skill, would not be such as to reproduce the statue by their union. An accuracy, almost mathematical, is necessary for this purpose; and this can only be obtained from pictures executed by the processes of the Daguerreotype and Talbotype. In order to do this with the requisite nicety, we must construct a Binocular Camera, which will take the pictures simultaneously, and of the same size.”

The Binocular Camera, as suggested by Sir David Brewster, is now being con-

stantly employed by the writer with perfect success, for taking Stereoscopic Daguerreotype Portraits and pictures. These portraits, when viewed in the Stereoscope, present the appearance of natural or modelled figures standing out in perfect relief. Persons desirous of possessing these new and extraordinary illusions, with Stereoscopes of the best construction, may be supplied with them at this Photographic Institution.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS TO SITTERS.

It being obvious that the utmost care is necessary on the part of the Photographer, it may be as well to enforce the fact, that to ensure success, much depends also upon the sitter. All colors are not equally Photogenic, and some are less adapted for Photographic portraits than others; it has been deemed advisable, therefore, to offer such suggestions relative to dress, as are calculated to produce agreeable pictures. As some erroneous views extensively prevail in the public mind as to the kind of light and the hour of the day most suitable for securing good Daguerreotype portraits, the following preliminary remarks may be not unnecessary.

From Daguerreotypes having been styled "Sun Pictures," very many persons who are unacquainted with the method of producing them, have imagined that portraits can only be successfully taken on bright unclouded days. In the infancy of this beautiful art, and long before chemical science had raised it to its present position, direct sunshine was almost absolutely necessary to produce impressions on plates or paper ; but repeated experiments have enabled the operator to render his plates so exquisitely sensitive, that an intervening cloud is now no obstacle to his manipulations. Indeed it has been clearly ascertained that a medium light is far more suited for photographic purposes than the uninterrupted glare of sunshine. Under a brilliant sun, and a clear blue sky, much longer sittings are required, and the portraits are often not so good. In the clear and beautiful light of the higher Alps,

even with the most sensitive preparations, it requires many minutes more to produce a picture than it does in London. In Mexico, with the most brilliant light, twenty minutes or half an hour are required to produce effects which in England would occupy but one minute. This arises, no doubt, from a variation in the proportion of heat, light, and actinism which compose the solar beam. The diffused light of a cloudy day enables the artist to blend the tones of his pictures, and thus to produce a soft and pleasing effect. It is in draperies that the beneficial agency of subdued light is most apparent. It is evident, therefore, that persons desirous of obtaining good portraits need not wait for clear bright days, since only an actual fog can prevent their being taken. Almost any day is now suitable for portrait taking, for by an arrangement of blinds, &c., artificial clouds may be made when the sun

shines too powerfully ; and we have seen that clouds themselves, by their modifications of light on bright days, actually afford an assistance to the artist.

The hour of the day which may be selected to sit for a Photograph, is of far more importance than the public generally imagine. On this head the writer would offer two suggestions :—

First.—VISIT THE ARTIST AT AN EARLY HOUR.

Second.—IF POSSIBLE, APPOINT THE HOUR ON THE PREVIOUS DAY.

Often, during the winter months, have groups of visitors called at the Institution as late as three or four o'clock in the afternoon, and not being aware of the importance of the first suggestion, have been compelled to suffer bitter disappointment. They have been most anxious to secure several impressions of a friend, or friends, about to leave England on the following

day. Had they called two hours earlier, they might have gazed with delight on the features of some valued friend, now in a distant land;—but the light was gone, and, as a natural consequence, every effort to secure a good likeness was unsuccessful. On many days, during the winter months, it is not possible to take a first-class portrait later than two o'clock—the chemical action of the light after this hour, being so feeble that the sittings are too much protracted. Yet the same amount of light, two hours earlier, would have produced a portrait of the first quality. There is another reason why it is important to VISIT THE ARTIST EARLY. Late in the afternoon, on dark days, the operator cannot color his plates with the same certainty as he could with a greater amount of light. See p. 28. Absolute failure may arise from this cause alone, even at a time when, if the plate had been correctly toned, the

quality of the light was such as to produce a good picture. This disaster may occasionally happen to the best manipulator, even at an early hour of a dark day; but, having the day before him, he would ultimately succeed. When the proper light is gone, however, all chance of producing a good impression has gone with it.

The above remarks must be received with some qualification. The reader will remember that the writer has been speaking of dark winter days. During the past summer he has, in cases of emergency, taken many good Daguerreotypes as late as five or even six in the evening; but, as a general rule, the above remarks are applicable, and the following maxim will be confirmed by the experience of all good Photographers, that *late sittings but too frequently end in disappointment.*

The second suggestion is less important, but attention to it will often prove advan-

tageous. The size and number of the portraits being determined on previously, the artist is enabled, before the sitter arrives, to prepare several plates, which he can use successively, without occupying more of the time of the sitter than is essential to procure good impressions. Whereas, if the plates are not previously prepared, some ten or fifteen minutes must elapse before a plate will be ready for a second impression.

As Daguerreotypes are taken in a *few seconds*, many persons imagine that a *few minutes* will be amply sufficient to devote to a sitting. This notion is erroneous. In order to obtain a good picture, half an hour, at least, should be appropriated to the purpose. During this period several may be taken, one of which will be undoubtedly preferred to the others. No one will deny that a good portrait is occasionally obtained at the first sitting; but this is the

exception, not the rule. Let it be borne in mind, that if five or six impressions are taken (supposing all are equally good as to tone, and correct as to likeness), the *expression* is generally more pleasing and natural in one than in the others.

DIRECTIONS TO SITTERS RESPECTING DRESS.

Ladies are informed that dark satins and silks, whether shot, watered, or plain, always by their rich light and shade, produce fine effects. Checked, striped, or figured materials also, provided they be not too light, produce agreeable results by their variety. The colours least suitable for Daguerreotype, and therefore to be avoided, are white, light blue, pink, and their combinations. Velvets also give a bad effect. Shawls, scarfs, mantles, and all flowing drapery, add materially to the beauty of the picture.

For Gentlemen—Black, figured, check, plaid, or other fancy vests and neckcloths, are preferable to white.

For Children's Dresses—Plaid, striped, or figured material is the most interesting. White, pink, and blue colours should be especially avoided. If the spencer or jacket be black, and the lower part of the dress of a lighter colour, very pretty pictures are formed. . Where groups of children are taken, variety of costume is recommended, to form pleasing contrasts. All kinds of lace are pretty, and the hair dressed in ringlets much enhances the general effect.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

IN concluding this little treatise, Mr. VINES would respectfully assure those ladies and gentlemen who may honor him with commissions, that, it will be his earnest endeavour to produce Daguerreotypes of the very first class. Every advance in the art will be carefully noted; and the progressive improvements by American, German, French, and English professors of Photography rendered available. It is only by such a course that excellence can be arrived at: perhaps there is no other profession which demands on the part of its pursuer more untiring energy. On this head a celebrated American writer has well observed:

“No one can *excel* in Photography who does not possess a natural taste for the fine arts,—who is not quick in discerning grace and beauty,—who is regardless of the principles of perspective, foreshortening and other rules of drawing,—or *who sets about it merely for the sake of gain*, without the least ambition to rise to the first rank, both in its theory and practice. There is no profession in which a slovenly manner will not show itself, and none where its effects will be more apparent than in this.

“A good Daguerreotypist is by no means a mere machine, following a certain set of fixed rules. While the profession numbers its thousands of votaries, but few rise to any degree of eminence. It is because they look on it as a mere mechanical operation, and having no aim or pride beyond the earning of their daily bread, they calculate what will be a fair per

centage on the cost of their plate, case, and chemicals; leaving MIND, which is as much CAPITAL as anything else (where it is exercised) entirely out of the question."

This writer is perfectly correct in his opinions; for he who pursues Photography "*merely for the sake of gain*," will not only shrink from incurring those expenses in obtaining information, which are essential to his progress, but will, at all times, be anxious to impose on the public pictures which are a disgrace to the operator, a libel on the lovely art which he professes to practise.

Mr. Vines begs to state that no expense will be spared to render his pictures as perfect as can be produced, and no person will be expected to take a portrait which may be in any way unsatisfactory. The premises which he has just taken are spacious and convenient, and admirably adapted for Photographic purposes. Sitters are not required to ascend higher

than the drawing room floor. A commodious Camera has been erected, on scientific principles, with a view to secure the very best light which the day will admit, at whatever hour of the day sitters may call. The reception and exhibition rooms are specially arranged so as to ensure the comfort of visitors. *Invalids may be taken at their own residence.*

Poetry is the twin sister of art, and it is not therefore surprising that poets should have commemorated in "melodious verse" the triumph of the Daguerreotype. Mr. Vines trusts, that, without vanity, he may be permitted to present to the public the following little poems: the first from the pen of a gentleman of Clifton, whose fine perception of all that is beautiful in nature or art need no commendation here: the second by the author of "The Life of Chatterton," "Pen and Ink Sketches," &c.

LINES,

WRITTEN AFTER AN ATTENTIVE INSPECTION
OF SOME ADMIRABLY TAKEN PHOTOGRAPHIC
PORTRAITS.

Oh, wondrous power, which PHŒBUS, God of Arts,
To PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTIST now imparts !
'Tis like the Primal Voice that wak'd the sun ;
"BE LIGHT !—LIGHT WAS :"—Be portraiture !—'tis done.
He, in a moment, tracing line for line,
(The finest touch of graver, far less fine,)
Stamps on the mirror plate the "human face divine."
Well did the matchless BARD of MANTUA write ;
"Who dares impeach thy truth, thou source of light ?" *
—Oh, had bright ATHENS known this magic skill,
DEMOSTHENES had look'd his lightning still,
And PAUL'S majestic gaze had beam'd, as on MARS-HILL.

T. G.

May 14th, 1849. Clifton.

* "SOL tibi signa dabit. SOLEM quis dicere falsum
Audeat ?" VIRGIL. GEORG. I., 463.

ON RECEIVING SOME FAMILY PHOTO-
GRAPHIC PORTRAITS, FROM MR. VINES,
OF THE DAGUERREOTYPE INSTITUTION,
CLIFTON.

Said was it of an artist old,*
Whose landscapes, bath'd in orient gold,
 As Nature's self are bright,
That o'er the lovely scenes he drew,
He scattered each aerial hue
 With pencil "*steep'd in light.*"

We need not, in these modern days,
Award such metaphoric praise:
 Sunbeams are pencils fine!
Light is *itself* a limner rare,
Who mocks the artist's tedious care,
 And *flashes* his design.

Fair art! as in a mirror, we,
By thy bright aid, the features see,
 Of friend or kindred dear;
No flattery us'd—no erring touch
(Can mortal painters say as much?)
 To please or pain, is here!

* Claude.

Lo! on this polish'd plate impress'd
 Are forms of those I love the best;
 Shadows, no longer fleeting!
 But fix'd, as by magician's power,
 To wait my call at any hour,
 And give me silent greeting.

When toss'd upon th' Atlantic waves,
 Or when, where wild Niagara raves,
 I'm lone;—'mid varied scenes;
 I've but to ope this tiny case,
 To view again each household face,
 Though ocean intervenes!

Thanks, VINES! whose practis'd hand displays
 Its power to work with solar rays,
 For these mementos;—when
 I, too, can on my subject throw
 Such light as yours, I'll not be slow
 To praise with abler pen!

Bristol, July 26th, 1851.

The striking improvements which have recently been made in Photography, have elicited the highest encomiums from the PUBLIC PRESS.

A FEW NOTICES ARE APPENDED.

"Mr. VINES of the Photographic Institution, Park Street, has succeeded in effecting an improvement in Daguerreotype Portraits, which will, we think, render them quite as acceptable as the ivory miniature. The improvement consists in accelerating the process by means of electricity, and then tinting the portraits, in an agreeable and life-like manner. We have been favored with an inspection of some specimens, and never saw a more decided improvement; the deathly appearance, so justly complained of in the pictures taken by the old process is avoided, and the likenesses are life-like and pleasing."—*Bristol Mercury*.

"Nothing can be more successful, and such, we think, will be the decided opinion of such of our readers as will take the pains of personally inspecting the beautiful specimens taken by Mr. Vines, at the Photographic Institution, Park Street, and, we trust, THIS NEW PROCESS will receive that extensive patronage its merits so amply deserve."—*Bristol Mirror*.

"We have had the pleasure of inspecting the Photographic Institution, Park Street. The numerous specimens exhibited, demonstrate the high state of perfection to which the art has been brought. Taken by the unerring process of nature from life, they must be true to life. The pale hue and the rosy tinge are transferred to the picture with a truthfulness and precision to which the hand of an artist could make no pretension. Mr. Vines seems to have spared no expense in adapting the Institution to the improvements recently effected in the art, and we have consequently great pleasure in recommending it to the favourable notice of our readers."—*Bristol Examiner*."

"The NEW PROCESS fully merits the extensive patronage it has received."—*Bristol Gazette*.

"The portraits produced by Mr. Vines are some of the most perfect and beautiful we have ever seen."—*Somerset County Gazette*.

